

South Carolina Department of Agriculture

Hugh Weathers, Commissioner



Ask for South Carolina.

Nothing's Fresher. Nothing's Finer.

Celebrate Farmers Market Month in SC

– Eat Local for a Day – the Certified SC Way

COLUMBIA, SC – July 30, 2008 – Hugh Weathers, Commissioner of Agriculture, is pleased to announce that Governor Mark Sanford has proclaimed the month of August as Farmers Market Month in South Carolina, an extension of National Farmers Market Week, August 3-9, 2008.

To celebrate farmers markets as a valuable part of the state's food distribution system and to encourage consumers to buy local produce and products, Commissioner Weathers encourages everyone to "Eat Local for a Day - the Certified South Carolina Way" during Farmers Market Week. He said, "Look for the Certified SC logo. If you don't see it, ask for it, because 'Nothing's fresher. Nothing's finer.'"

"The local farmers market is a great place to teach children about the origin of their food," said Commissioner Weathers. "Ask the farmers questions. They are passionate about their products and would love to talk about them. Look for recipes. Try something new. Above all, enjoy the sights, sounds and tastes of a local farmers market. Then, take your products home and celebrate with an all Certified South Carolina Grown family dinner on the table."

Farmers markets allow consumers to have access to locally grown, farm fresh produce and products and enable farmers the opportunity to develop a personal relationship with their customers. Direct marketing of farm products through farmers markets continues to be an important sales outlet for agricultural producers throughout the state and nation. Today, there are more than 75 local farmers markets and three large state farmers markets in South Carolina.

Economists say that every \$100,000 increase in farm sales creates up to five new jobs and generates another \$200,000 in economic activity. "When people buy from farmers markets, they add to the farm income and help them stay in business," Commissioner Weathers said. "It also helps the environment because their food travels a shorter distance to get to the market."

Commissioner Weathers asks the people of South Carolina to connect with their agricultural roots by visiting their local farmers market or by stopping by one of the three state farmers markets at 1001 Bluff Rd. in Columbia, at 2513 W. Lucas St. in Florence, and at 1354 Rutherford Rd. in Greenville. Discover the wide variety of fruits and vegetables as well as plants, flowers, and other agricultural products available. Make it an outing for family and friends.

To find the nearest farmers market and a list of Certified South Carolina members who grow, produce, and sell local products, visit the South Carolina Department of Agriculture web site at www.agriculture.sc.gov.

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